

Arkansas Forestry Commission

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DEODAR WEEVIL

IMPORTANCE: The eastern pine weevil (*Pissodes nemorensis*), commonly referred to as the deodar weevil, is found in most pine forests of Arkansas. It is capable of infesting all native pine species in the southeastern United States. In normal circumstances it infests dying or severely stressed trees in conjunction with other pine beetles. However, dense aggregations of this beetle have been found attacking the boles of trees in young, overstocked pine stands. In this case, trees are sporadically attacked throughout the stand and losses are typically about five percent of standing trees.

IDENTIFICATION: The adult beetle is 5-8 mm long and features brown coloration with two white spots on the wing covers. The leg-less, white larvae are fully grown at 8-12 mm. The most obvious evidence of deodar weevil, the presence of chip cocoons, is recognized after the insect has left the tree. Chip cocoons are made by the larvae so that they may pupate into an adult beetle. Created from strips of sapwood, they are tightly packed into an oval shaped indentation in the sapwood.

HABITS: Deodar weevils emerge in March and April. Generally the adult is inactive during the hot, summer climate. During the cooler periods of the day it feeds on phloem by inserting its rostrum, the elongated mouthpart, through the bark. Mating occurs during fall months in Arkansas. Adults aggregate to stressed trees, attracted by a male-released pheromone. The peak of aggregation is early-November in Arkansas. Eggs are laid in feeding sites and larvae will mine in the phloem over the course of the fall, winter, and early spring. Pupation occurs in spring.

CONTROL: These weevils are very common, but damages have been observed in overstocked pine stands that are nearing about 15 years old. Stands with complete canopy cover may provide a cooler habitat better suited for the deodar weevil to increase its abundance. Thinning a stand is the most effective way to prevent vegetative competition and resulting insect damages.



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Photo credit: Adult deodar weevils: Natasha Wright, forestryimages.org; chip cocoons: Chandler Barton, Arkansas Forestry Commission.